

REMARKS

Applicants respectfully request favorable reconsideration of this application, as amended.

The specification and claims have been amended to address the informalities noted by the Examiner. Additionally, Claim 12 has been amended to incorporate subject matter from Claims 14 and 15, which have been cancelled accordingly. Claim 13 has also been cancelled, and new Claim 16 has been added dependent from Claim 11. Accordingly, Claims 11, 12, and 16 are pending for further consideration.

In the outstanding Office Action, each of independent Claims 11 and 12 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Ara et al. (DE 198 41 456, citations having been taken from counterpart US 6,223,625). Reconsideration of the rejection is respectfully requested in light of the following remarks.

It is noted, initially, that Claim 11 was previously allowed over the Ara reference. Applicants respectfully submit that Claim 11 remains allowable over Ara for the reasons indicated in the remarks accompanying the Amendment dated January 21, 2005. Note in particular the features that splines are provided on an inner peripheral portion of the plate and an outer peripheral portion of the holder,

that rivets are disposed through the splines of the holder, and that the splines of the holder, and that the splines of the plate project radially inwardly relative to respective to inner peripheries of the retainer plates. Ara does not teach or suggest the foregoing combination of features as set forth in Claim 11. Applicants therefore respectfully request that the rejection on Ara be withdrawn as to Claim 11.

Claim 12, as noted previously, has been amended to incorporate subject matter from Claims 14 and 15. Thus, as now set forth in Claim 12, the splines provided on the holder include splines provided on the two retainer plates of the holder, and a rivet is disposed through a spline of each of the retainer plates and an intervening portion of the annular ring of the holder. Note that Ara's annular ring 31 and retaining plates 27 are not riveted together at splines of the retaining plates, as recited in Claim 12. Ara's retaining plates 27 are connected by a rivet 37 and a dowel pin 36, neither of which passes through ring 31. As would be appreciated from Applicants' specification, the arrangement recited in Claim 12 allows for a reduced diameter, high strength damper assembly of simple construction. Applicants respectfully request that the

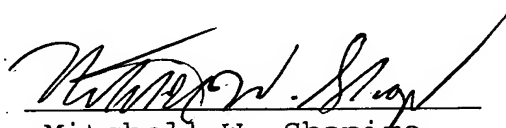
outstanding rejection on Ara also be withdrawn as to Claim 12, in view of the patentable distinctions just discussed.

A further Notice of Allowance is respectfully solicited.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge to Deposit Account No. 50-1165 (XA-9308B) any fees under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16 and 1.17 that may be required by this paper and to credit any overpayment to that Account. If any extension of time is required in connection with the filing of this paper and has not been separately requested, such extension is hereby requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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November 2, 2006